

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 ACDA-12 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5288
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION USNATO
USNMR SHAPE
USDOCOSOUTH
USCINCEUR
CINCUSAFE

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 ATHENS 2775

BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, US, GR, TU
SUBJECT: CONTINUED REACTION TO PROPOSED REPEAL OF THE
TURKISH EMBARGO

REF: (A) ATHENS 2728, (B) ATHENS 2703

1. THE USG DECISION TO SEEK REPEAL OF THE U.S. ARMS EMBARGO
AGAINST TURKEY CONTINUED TO BE THE PRINCIPAL STORY IN THE
GREEK PRESS APRIL 4. ALTHOUGH THE DEPARTMENT'S APRIL 3
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STATEMENT ON THE U.S. ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR THE EASTERN
MEDITERRANEAN CAME TO LATE TO BE INCLUDED IN THE MORNING
PRESS, IT WAS FULLY COVERED BY THE AFTERNOON NEWSPAPERS
AND THE GOVERNMENT-OPERATED RADIO AND TV WHICH BEGAN
CARRYING REPORTS ON THE STATEMENT IN THEIR EARLY
AFTERNOON NEWSCASTS. TREATMENT OF THE STORY CONTINUES
TO BE UNIFORMLY NEGATIVE AND HIGHLY CRITICAL OF THE

U.S. ACTION.

2. THE MORNING PAPERS (WHICH DO NOT PUBLISH ON MONDAYS) PICKED UP DEVELOPMENTS BEGINNING ON SUNDAY (REF B) AND REPLAYED THE STATEMENTS BY ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AVEROFF AND OPPOSITION LEADERS (REF A). THEY ALSO REFERRED TO THE APRIL 2 NEW YORK TIMES STORY BY NICHOLAS GAGE ON THE GREEK REACTION TO THE NEWS THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WOULD SEEK TO HAVE THE EMBARGO LIFTED. A GENERAL THEME APPEARING IN MUCH OF THE PRESS REPORTING WAS THAT THE USG SHOULD HAVE WAITED BEFORE ANNOUNCING ITS NEW POLICY UNTIL AFTER TURKEY HAD MADE ITS PROPOSALS ON CYPRUS SINCE THE TURKS NOW HAVE NO INCENTIVE TO MAKE ACCEPTABLE PROPOSALS.

3. PRO-GOVERNMENT AKROPOLIS' COVERAGE DWELT ON THE NEGATIVE REACTION IN NICOSIA TO THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO, AND SPECULATED THAT THE GOC IS CONTEMPLATING RETALIATORY MEASURES AGAINST THE U.S., SUCH AS ABROGATING THE AGREEMENT PERMITTING THE USG TO OPERATE RADIO STATIONS IN CYPRUS OR CANCELLING THE USAGE OF THE BRITISH SBAS BY THE USG FOR FLIGHTS OVER THE MIDDLE EAST. AN AKROPOLIS EDITORIAL EXPRESSED THE HOPE THE CONGRESS WILL REJECT THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSAL TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTING KATHIMERINI UNDERLINED THE GOG'S POSITION THAT REPEAL OF THE EMBARGO BEFORE THE TURKISH PROPOSALS ON CYPRUS WERE KNOWN WAS NEITHER CORRECT NOR JUST. THE NEWSPAPER ALSO NOTED

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THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE RULED OUT THAT THE GREEK GOVERNMENT WOULD SEEK IMMEDIATE REVISION OF THE U.S.-GREEK DCA IN VIEW OF THE ADDITIONAL BENEFITS GAINED BY TURKEY. KATHIMERINI AND AKROPOLIS BOTH CARRIED A STORY ON THE NEGATIVE REACTION BY GREEK-AMERICANS IN THE U.S., QUOTING EUGENE ROSSIDIS' ANGRY COMMENTS AND HIS PREDICTION THAT LIFTING THE EMBARGO WOULD WORSEN U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS.

4. OPPOSITION TO VIMA'S MAIN STORY HIGHLIGHTED WHAT IT CLAIMED WERE EXTRAORDINARY SECURITY MEASURES BEING ADOPTED TO PROTECT AMERICAN AND TURKISH DIPLOMATS, AND OTHERS, FROM POSSIBLE RETALIATION BY GREEKS INCENSED AT THE USG'S INTENTION TO LIFT THE EMBARGO. THE NEWSPAPER ALSO CARRIED A WIDE-RANGING REPORT BY ITS NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT EFSTATHIADIS WHICH, AMONG OTHER THINGS, STATED THAT GOG OFFICIALS FELT THE USG'S NEW POLICY TOWARDS TURKEY WOULD ENCOURAGE TURKISH INTRANSIGENCE AND THAT WASHINGTON WAS NOT VERY CONCERNED OVER THE GREEK OR CYPRIOT REACTION.

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5. COMMUNIST (KKE-EXTERIOR) RIZOSPASTIS' ACCOUNT, FROM ITS NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT CHRISTOS NIKOLOPOULOS, STATED THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAD DECIDED TO SEPARATE THE EMBARGO ISSUE FROM THE CYPRUS QUESTION. THE REPORT NOTED THAT THE USG WOULD WITHDRAW THE TURKISH DCA AS A TRADE-OFF TO GET CONGRESSIONAL APPROVAL TO REMOVE THE EMBARGO. THE ARTICLE ALSO MENTIONED THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD SEEK TO INCREASE ASSISTANCE TO GREECE FROM \$122 MILLION TO \$140 MILLION. A RIZOSPASTIS EDITORIAL STRONGLY CRITICIZED ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER AVEROFF'S REMARKS, STATING THAT GREECE MUST FOLLOW ITS OWN FOREIGN POLICY. THE DISSIDENT COMMUNIST PARTY ORGAN, AVGHI (KKE-INTERIOR), FEATURED A STORY BY CORRESPONDENT HRISOSTOMIDIS WHO IS TRAVELLING WITH UNCLASSIFIED

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PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS' PARTY IN WESTERN EUROPE. HRISOSTOMIDIS, CITING SOURCES IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S PARTY, SUMMARIZED THE GOG'S THINKING ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES: (A) THE DECISION TO

LIFT THE EMBARGO WAS A U.S. PROBLEM, BUT IT HAD REPERCUSSIONS FOR GREECE AND CYPRUS; (B) THE U.S. SHOULD HAVE WAITED UNTIL THE TURKISH PROPOSALS ON CYPRUS BECAME KNOWN; (C) LIFTING THE EMBARGO WOULD COMPLICATE THE CYPRUS QUESTION; AND (D) RAISING THE EMBARGO WOULD MAKE THE CARAMANLIS-ECEVIT DIALOGUE MORE DIFFICULT.

6. THE AFTERNOON PRESS COVERED GENERALLY THE SAME STORIES AS THE MORNING EDITIONS, THE PRIMARY NEW ELEMENT BEING THE INCLUSION OF THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT ON THE TURKISH EMBARGO. THE OPPOSITION PRESS WAS ALSO SOMEWHAT STRONGER IN ITS CRITICISM OF THE GOG FOR NOT REACTING MORE VIGOROUSLY TO THE NEWS THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WOULD ASK CONGRESS TO RESCIND THE EMBARGO. MOREOVER, WIDER ATTENTION WAS GIVEN TO THE ALLEGEDLY STEPPED-UP SECURITY BEING PROVIDED TO AMERICAN AND TURKISH DIPLOMATS TO FORESTALL POSSIBLE ATTACKS AGAINST THEM.

7. PRO-GOVERNMENT VRADYNI EMPHASIZED THE NEGATIVE REACTION IN GREECE AND CYPRUS TO THE CHANGE IN U.S. POLICY AND SAID THE DEPARTMENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT, WHICH INCLUDED ASSURANCES OF U.S. INTEREST IN THE SOLITION OF THE CYPRUS QUESTION, WOULD NOT DAMPEN THIS REACTION. PRO-GOVERNMENT APOYEVMATINI ESSENTIALLY REPEATED THE REPORTS FROM NICOSIA ABOUT POSSIBLE RETALIATORY ACTIONS THE GOC MIGHT TAKE AGAINST THE U.S., AS WELL AS EMPHASIZING THAT EXTRA SECURITY PRECAUTIONS WERE BEING TAKEN IN ATHENS.

8. ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE ESTIA WAS CRITICAL OF BOTH THE U.S. AND GREEK GOVERNMENTS IN ITS EDITORIAL, SAYING THAT THE USG WAS WRONG TO LIFT THE EMBARGO AND THAT ACQUIESCENCE BY THE GOG WOULD ENCOURAGE TURKISH DEMANDS IN THE AEGEAN. IN A STORY FILED FROM LUXEMBOURG, ESTIA WROTE THAT THE REACTION AMONG UNCLASSIFIED

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THE GREEKS ACCOMPANYING PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS WAS ONE OF DISMAY AND CONCERN THAT U.S.-GREEK RELATIONS WOULD BE SERIOUSLY DISRUPTED. IT WAS ALSO SUGGESTED THAT CARAMANLIS MIGHT TELEPHONE PRESIDENT CARTER TO REGISTER HIS OWN PROTEST AND THAT THE GREEK-AMERICAN COMMUNITY WOULD BE MOBILIZED TO FIGHT THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO. LEFTIST TA NEA'S COVERAGE WAS SIMILAR IN MOST RESPECTS TO ITS MORNING COUNTER PART, TO VIMA, ALTHOUGH TA NEA ALSO SUGGESTED A GENERAL IMPRESSION EXISTED THAT IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS SOMETHING FAVORABLE TO GREECE WOULD DEVELOP. FINALLY, LEFTIST ELEFTHEROTYPIA EMPHASIZED THE "STRANGE SILENCE" ON THE PART OF THE GOG IN THE FACE OF THE NEWS THAT THE USG WOULD PRESS FOR THE LIFTING OF THE EMBARGO. EDITORIALY, THE NEWSPAPER WARNED THAT ULTIMATELY U.S. SELF-INTEREST HAD DICTATED U.S. POLICY -- THUS THE MOVE TO LIFT THE EMBARGO; HOWEVER, THE DITORIAL CLAIMED, THE GREEK PEOPLE WOULD NOT IN ANY EVENTUALITY SURRENDER IN THE FACE OF PRESSURE FROM

THE U.S.
MCCLOSKEY

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